

You Know When You're Outta Luck

a comedy sketch idea by Jonathan D Steinhoff, 5.4.13©

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

This may be viewed as a parable about how rebellion results when society fails to offer a level playing field and gives away all the free refrigerators at the subjective preference of tyrants.

[A TV game show that centers around its tyrannical moderator, BRIAN. Throughout the show BRIAN has many opportunities to repeat the show's name, however, he calls the show, "You Know When You're #@0! Outta Luck!", the sound bleeping over the word he uses between "You're" and "Outta". A big blinking sign behind him contradicts the wording BRIAN uses for the show's name. There are two contestants, CONTESTANT BILL and CONTESTANT MARGARET.]

BRIAN

Hello everyone, and welcome to MY favorite game show, "You Know When You're #@0! Outta Luck!" For those of you who may not know how the game is played, what we do here is, we show a video of someone in a situation, and it's up to our panelists to hit their buzzer at the moment they believe the person is about to be #@0! outta luck! You know why? 'Cause, you gotta know when you're #@0! outta luck!

CONTESTANT BILL

I see, and then after we hit the buzzer, first you stop the video, but, so then after that you continue rolling the video, right, to see if that person really WAS about to be #@0! outta luck!

BRIAN

(enraged at BILL) What? So, you don't watch the show? YOU DO NOT WATCH THE SHOW? No, we do NOT show the rest of the video! There's no need to: I TELL you whether or not, after we stopped the video, the person immediately became #@0! outta luck! That's how it works. Is that okay with you, Bill?

CONTESTANT BILL

But how do WE know, I mean, so if-

BRIAN

I think we need to move on, Bill! C'mon everyone, let's start playing, "You Know When You're #@0! Outta Luck!"

[The AUDIENCE cheers and the show goes on. A video is shown of a MAN walking innocently down a sidewalk. Suddenly a SKI MASKED MAN leaps stealthily out of the bushes behind him with a baseball bat and prepares to club the MAN in the back of the head. CONTESTANT BILL hits his buzzer.]

BRIAN

Bill, Bill, Bill! What was that for? Why did you hit your buzzer?

CONTESTANT BILL

Well, uh, that man was about to get clubbed in the back of the head, he, that guy with the ski mask, he was-

BRIAN

No Bill, I'm SORRY! The man was fine! That guy with the ski mask and the baseball bat was on his way to a baseball game. What follows on the video is that, what we see is, the two of them singing, "Take Me Out To The Ballgame Together" as they walk down the sidewalk!

CONTESTANT BILL

I sort of wish I could actually SEE them doing that.

BRIAN

And you know what else, Bill? Audience, shall we tell him?

AUDIENCE

You're #@0! outta luck!

BRIAN

That's right, Bill, because hitting the buzzer at the wrong time means, we're going to have to subtract 10 points from your score! Negative 10 points for you, Bill!

CONTESTANT BILL

He really didn't look like he was playing around with that baseball bat.

BRIAN

And now here's another scene!

[A video is shown of a YOUNG WOMAN playing piano at a recital in front a small SOCIETY GROUP in a large drawing room. After we watch her for a few seconds, CONTESTANT MARGARET hits her buzzer.]

BRIAN

Excellent, Margaret! Perfect! You hit your buzzer at the precise moment that woman was about to be #@0! outta luck! Twenty-five points, Margaret!

CONTESTANT BILL

How's that?

BRIAN

I'm sorry, do you have a problem, Bill?

CONTESTANT BILL

Just how was she, you know, outta luck? She was just sitting there, playing the piano.

BRIAN

Okay, well Bill, I'll EXPLAIN it. Had we continued rolling the video, we would have seen a giant boulder drop through the skylight onto her, smashing the piano, and severely injuring the young woman.

CONTESTANT BILL

Excuse me?

BRIAN

Okay, we're gonna have to move along again, Bill! Let's work on getting some points by paying attention – how does that sound?

CONTESTANT BILL

Yeah. Good.

BRIAN

Uh – just watch the video please, Bill, alright?

[They roll another video, this one showing an OLD MAN in a wheelchair eating breakfast in a hospital cafeteria. Three seconds into it BILL hits his buzzer.]

BRIAN

Oh Bill, I'm so sorry, did you hit your buzzer by accident? We still have to penalize you, point-wise.

CONTESTANT BILL

No, I hit my buzzer on purpose, Brian. See, uh, the OLD MAN was about to have a heart attack, right?

BRIAN

Oh really?

CONTESTANT BILL

And a piano was about to drop on his head.

BRIAN

That's negative 50 points, Bill. Negative 50 – because you REALLY don't know when someone's #@0! outta luck.

CONTESTANT BILL

Oh is that so?

BRIAN

It's funny, I just have to say, I know you already told us, but I just can't believe you're a contestant yet you've never even seen the show before, that's what amazes me!

CONTESTANT BILL

I apologize for that, I just never-

BRIAN

Fine, it's fine. It's just.... Unusual, that's all. Okay, here's another video. Ready, Bill and Margaret? Oh, and Bill?

CONTESTANT BILL

Yes Brian?

BRIAN

I don't think I need to tell you what it means if you lose this round!

CONTESTANT BILL

I, if I, uh-

BRIAN

You'll see. And here's the video.....

[A video is shown of WILEY COYOTE and THE ROAD RUNNER. As it progresses, it becomes apparent that WILEY COYOTE's Acme explosives are about to blow up beneath him despite his expectation that he's planted them near THE ROAD RUNNER. This is when MARGARET hits her buzzer.]

BRIAN

Excellent, Margaret! The Road Runner was just about to be exploded into pieces! Bill, do you know what this means for you?

CONTESTANT BILL

The Road Runner wasn't outta luck! It was Wiley Coyote! Not that it would have mattered if I had hit my buzzer. You! You would just have-

BRIAN

Whatever. But Bill, by now you should be noticing it isn't just the people in the videos who are - well, you tell him, audience!

AUDIENCE

You're #@0! outta luck!

BRIAN

Correct, audience! Bill, you are #@0! outta luck!

[CONTESTANT BILL, furious now, storms over to BRIAN and grabs him by the throat.]

CONTESTANT BILL

No, Brian, I'm not #@0! outta luck, you're the one who's #@0! outta luck, you got me?

BRIAN

Uh, yes! Of course! That's, that's right, Bill! Margaret, you, you're-

CONTESTANT BILL

Tell her, Brian!

BRIAN

Margaret, you're #@0! outta luck! Okay, Bill, so, prizes, we have for you-

CONTESTANT BILL

Maybe later, Brian. Because right now, I think someone else around here might also be #@0! outta luck!

BRIAN

We need to pause now, for, for these important announcements. For more, for more what, audience?

AUDIENCE

More "You Know When You're #@0! Outta Luck!"

[CONTESTANT BILL maintains his grip on BRIAN's throat, as MARGARET nervously hurries off the game show set.]

THE END